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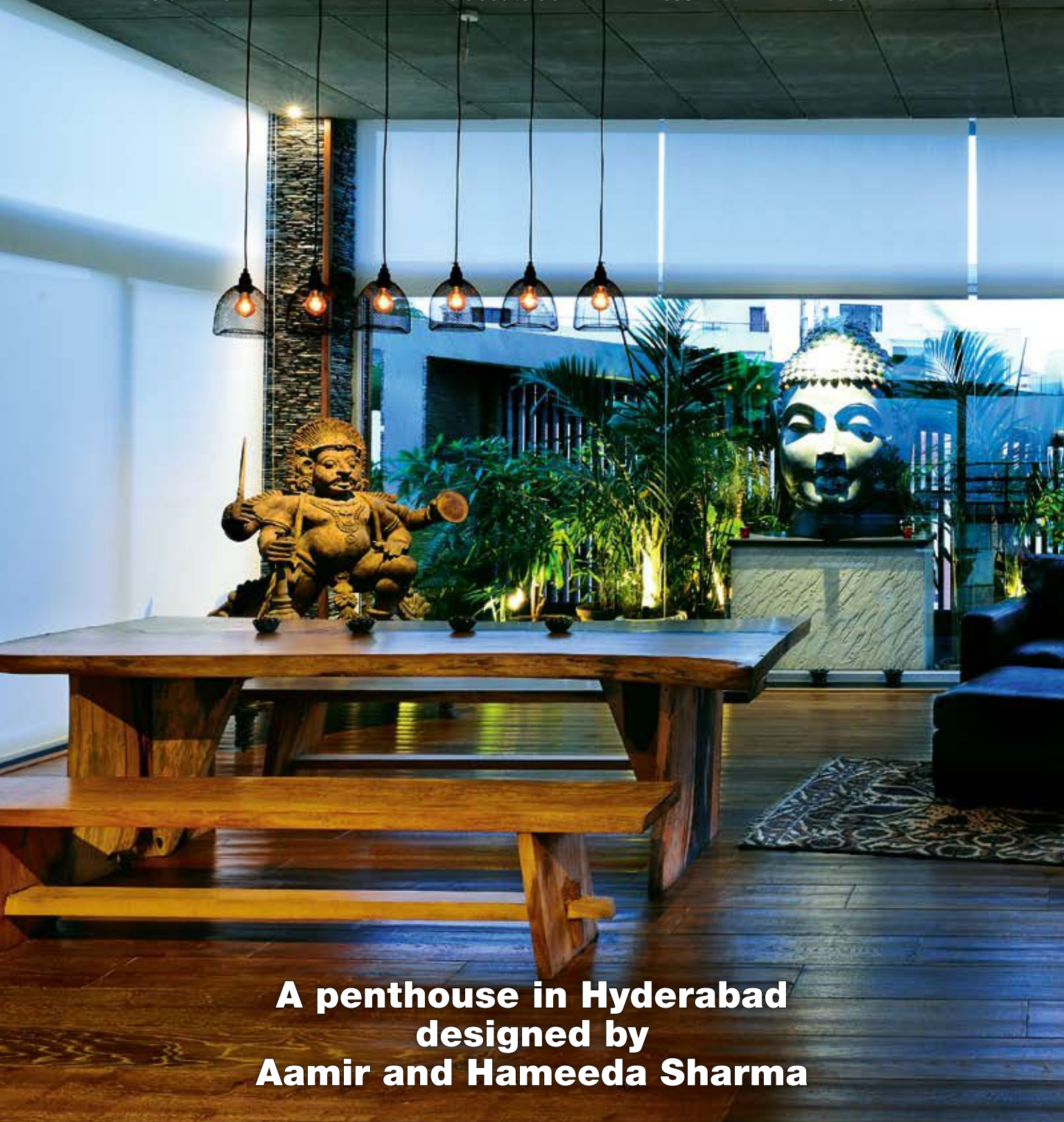
THE INDIAN DESIGN MAGAZINE

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ISSUE 359

JULY 2015

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Aamir and Hameeda Sharma**

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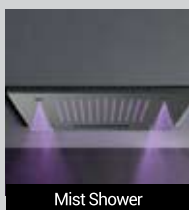
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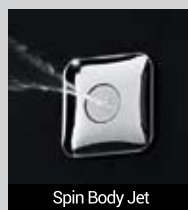
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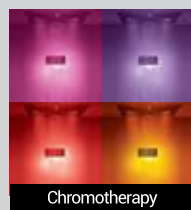
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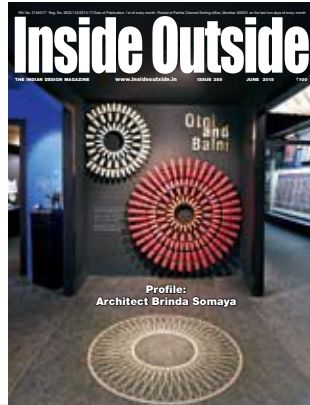
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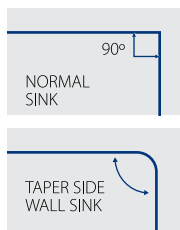
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With the monsoons setting in, the entire construction and home building industry slows down significantly. Many projects are rushed to completion before the rains set in, and many are reluctant to start new projects during the monsoons.

Such a seasonal pattern is common across the world. For example, in Europe and US, winter is the slow season.

But still, there are many interesting completed projects that we are happy to share with our readers.

As usual, we have a variety of different projects ranging from a penthouse and an apartment to a farmhouse and an office and a resort.

Lastly, the entire architectural community was very sorry to lose Charles Correa, one of the great architects of our time. Charles Correa, whose work Inside Outside has covered extensively over the years, was recognized not just in India but globally. In a tribute we take a look at his glorious career spanning more than five decades.

Ashok H. Advani



- 19 Publisher's Letter
- 24 Letters
- 26 Art: Nina Das
- 30 Cushions
- 34 Furniture
- 34 Wall Shelves
- 136 Snippets
- 140 Access Point
- 142 Advertisers' Directory



A penthouse in Hyderabad
designed by
Aamir and Hameeda Sharma

COVER PHOTOGRAPH: SAMEER CHAWDA



62

40 RETROSPECTIVE CHARLES CORREA

In a career spanning more than five decades, Charles Correa, Indian architect, is remembered by his peers for the quality of his work. But also for walking the talk, as Devyani Jayakar finds out.

52 PENTHOUSE A LOFTY PERCH

Aamir and Hameeda, the creative force behind AANDH, design a swanky penthouse for their client in the affluent Banjara Hills area of Hyderabad.

Text: Deepa Shailendra Photographs: Sameer Chawda

62 BUNGALOW SHELL HOUSE

Dipen Gada designs a home in Vadodara using concrete to advantage. With a footprint of 140 ft x 48 ft, the home enjoys enviable views from all its rooms.

Text: Devyani Jayakar Photographs: Tejas Shah

72 FARM HOUSE ONE WITH NATURE

Interior designer Monica Khanna of Monica Khanna Designs works her magic to craft a rustic, recreational space in a farmhouse in New Delhi.

Text: Architect Apurva Bose Dutta
Photographs & Drawings: Somdutta, Ami Nhavkar

86 APARTMENT PRISTINE PALETTE

Behzad Kharas, principal architect at The BNK Group comes up with a winning formula for a swanky city pad that hits all the right notes.

Text: Mitalee Kurdekar Photographs: Subhash Patil

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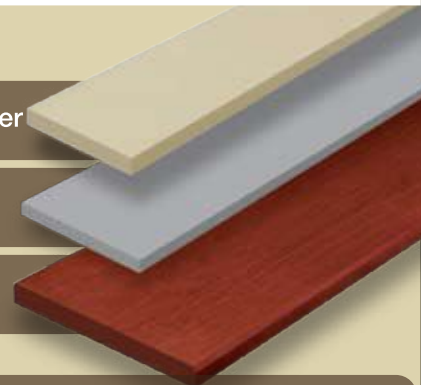


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86



96

96

RESIDENCE 'SYMMETRY IN CHARCOAL AND WHITE'

Anand Shah of Anand & Associates designs a stunning home for Rajan Dapki and his family on the outskirts of Ahmedabad.

Photographs: Bharat Aggarwal

108

RESORT 'LE POND' – AN ENCHANTING RESORT

Rooted in Puducherry's cultural and historical ethos, the resort Le Pondi is a statement of design based on nature, tranquillity and leisure.

Text: Nalini Vatsalan Nair

116

RESTAURANT 'DHABA TO RESTAURANT'

Architect Santosh Thole fashions a restaurant from a humble dhaba in a shed-like space, near Aurangabad.

Text: Kayus Wadia Photographs: Kishor Nikam



116

128

OFFICE 'BOLD AND VIBRANT'

Kaleido Architecture designs a lively workspace in Mumbai for an Indian multinational conglomerate, using solid colours and a stylish design concept.

Photographs: Ravi Kanade



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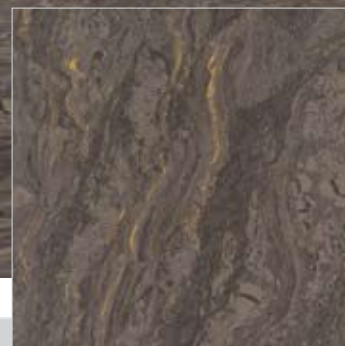
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It broke our hearts to read Sheila Shahani's editorial letter. All this while, we have always drawn a little inspiration from her letter in every issue. She has helped us see colours and light differently and with each issue we have turned a little more artistic. We hope that she reaches greater heights with her vision and artistic approach. She will be missed in every issue!

◆ **Rishita Gangji and Harshal Mehta,**
Fuego Photography

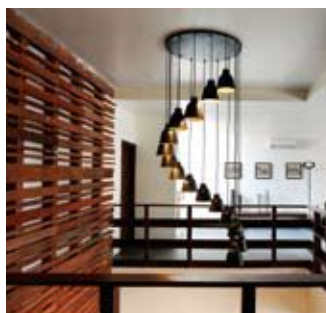


We would like to thank Inside Outside for publishing our project 'Crunch Patisserie' in the article 'Foodies' Corner' of the June 2015 issue. We look forward to working together again.

◆ **Architect Ranjeet Mukherjee,**
Gurgaon

I just want to thank Rajan K P and Kanupriya Garg for publishing such a wonderful article featuring our project 'Crosswinds' in the June 2015 issue. Thanks a lot for your efforts. The feature looks really good!

◆ **Architect Neha Sawhney,**
New Delhi



Thanks a lot for featuring my project in the article 'Rustic Retreats' in the May 2015 issue of Inside Outside magazine. I would have been even more pleased if a small profile picture of the architect had been included. Nevertheless, thanks again for the feature.

◆ **Architect Ajay Suryawanshi,**
Nasik

In our early years, we were featured in the 2005 and 2006 issues of Inside Outside. The magazine featured Ravi's house that got us a lot of mileage. Inside Outside still remains closest to our hearts as a magazine that is read by the professional. The magazine sets the platform for the architecture and design industry and it is still the most widely read and distributed magazine even today.

◆ **Interior designers Aamir and Hameeda Sharma,**
Hyderabad

Erratum:

In our June 2015 issue, in the article 'Preserving the Heritage' the name of the architect was incorrectly given. The architect's name is Hardik Patel and not Rajiv Patel. The error is regretted and we apologise to the architect.



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Artist Nina Das was born and brought up in the lap of nature, near the beautiful tea gardens of north Bengal. After studying at Welham Girls school, Dehradun, she continued her studies, in Textile Design at the Sophia Polytechnic (affiliated to Sir J J School of Arts and Fashion Designing). Nina has had a rich career in the line of art and design – she has been dealing in textiles and ‘fashion leather’ for the past 30 years and is the recipient of various awards. She turned her hand to art in July 2013



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with her 'India Sketches'. Her moto: 'My mind is my canvas inspired by colours empowered by my imagination.' Nina works primarily in watercolours and black ink on handmade paper. There are also a series of black and white sketches and acrylics on canvas. Says the artist: 'I love watercolors; the colours mix and form their own shades. Like a river the flow is natural and exciting. The fact that it cannot always be controlled gives it essence. I think of my style as being colour and strokes. My most important tools are flat brushes for washes and a hard slant brush for strokes.' 

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*As per Women Health Organization report, published in 'Unique Journal of Medical & Dental Sciences'.

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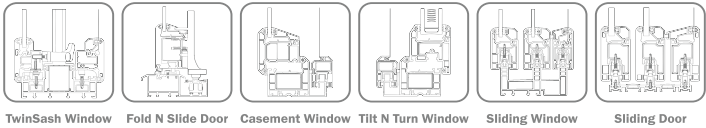
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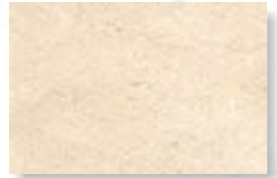
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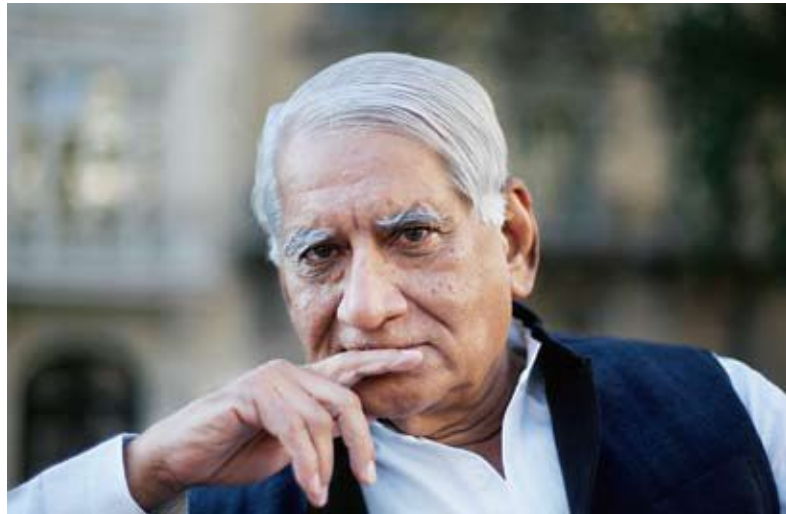


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Charles Correa – RIP



1ST SEPTEMBER 1930 – 16TH JUNE 2015

In a career spanning more than five decades, Charles Correa, Indian architect, is remembered by his peers for the quality of his work. But also for walking the talk, as Devyani Jayakar finds out.

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY CHARLES CORREA ASSOCIATES



Mahatma Gandhi Memorial, Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad.

[Correaesque]: Is that a noun? Or an adjective? I'm not quite sure. But it's certainly been used to describe architecture meeting the standards of the architect Charles Correa. Okay, maybe you're not going to find this in a dictionary. Yet. But the term was recently used by an Indian jury, in its commendation to describe the work of a young award-winning architect. And of course the architect was delighted by the comparison. But what does it take for one's name to become a common noun, an adjective or even a verb? Like Xerox, for example? Evidently, a lot.

India has had a rather novel history. We are the products of a sustained encounter, first between the East and the Mughals and then with the West - the latter an ongoing one. These encounters have produced a culture and architecture which is unique. Says philosopher Paul Ricoeur, in his essay 'Universal Civilization and National Cultures': 'Every culture cannot sustain and absorb the shock of modern civilisation. There is the paradox: how to become modern and to return to sources; how to revive an old, dormant civilisation and take part in universal civilisation.'



Correa's Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur, is an arts centre built in 1992, dedicated to India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. It is a contemporary building based on the archaic notion of the cosmos – the navagraha (nine planets) mandal, with the ninth square tipped off. Indian colours – pinks, oranges and ochres – define its palette. He also rebuilt Mumbai's centuries-old Portuguese Church in a flamboyant new design that used a spectacular mural by the famed artist MF Hussain, to imbue the place of worship with light. More recently, in the Ismaili Centre in Toronto, Correa's vision was for the building to respond to the traditions of Islamic architecture using contemporary forms and modern materials. It won an Ontario Association of Architects Design Excellence Award.



Jawahar Kala
Kendra, Jaipur.





Correa was at the forefront of an intense debate over the shape and form that Mumbai should take.

With Kanchenjunga, the residential tower in Mumbai, 'Correa may have simply thought of it as several homes, stacked one on top of the other,' says Samira Rathod. The building is a 32-storey reinforced concrete structure with 6.3 mt cantilevered open terraces. The central core is composed of lifts and provides the main structural element for resisting lateral loads. In designing the cross-ventilated apartments Correa pushed his capacity for ingenious cellular planning to the limit, as is evident from the interlock of four different apartment typologies. At the same time, he effectively shielded these high rise units from the effects of both the sun and monsoon rains. This was largely achieved by providing the tower with relatively deep garden verandas, suspended in the air.

Kanchenjunga, Mumbai.





So if many architects have been content to gaze languidly towards the past, Correa's work is a powerful example of how to mine historical memory without stifling the creative imagination. Correa understood that to create meaningful architecture is not to parody history, but to reinterpret it. And this, in a culture where buildings must be reducible to arresting images that can be sold to clients and resold to the end-users. That way stardom lies.

Another indication of the worth of the body of work of an architect would surely be the opinion of peers. Correa comes out shining here too. Witness the many accolades, from living legends and respected award-winning architects, all the way to young interns:

BV Doshi: 'Correa's work has many messages. It tells a story about place, context, time, past and present. The way spaces unfold, the undulation of his landscape, the way visitors move and see, was Correa's special talent. His Kanchenjunga in Mumbai heralded a new typology in the urban context, which holds good even today. His response to urban density combined the concept of an open-to-sky verandah, similar to living on the ground.'

British Council, Delhi.



David Adjaye, OBE: 'He has that rare capacity to give physical form to something as intangible as 'culture' or 'society.' Adjaye also describes Correa's work as 'Modernism from the East,' and adds, 'Great architecture should always make you feel great about yourself. ...like wearing great clothes would. It elevates you, without feeling forced. Correa thought very specifically about the problems and presented a solution which transcended the ordinary, the functional and the efficient. It became a work of art.'

Former RIBA librarian Dr Irena Murray: 'Correa is brilliantly inventive in his deployment of certain timeless themes in Indian culture and philosophy – journey, passage, void and the representation of the cosmos. He uses them as a means to creating ambitious new spaces and structures.'

Samira Rathod: 'Correa was the first to combine Indian history with the contemporary. Usually, what happens



Permanent Mission of India at the UN, NY.

In 1990, Correa became the third recipient of the Gold Medal from the International Union of Architects, while his many other accolades include the Aga Khan Award for Architecture and Japan's Praemium Imperiale.

Brain Center MIT, Boston





is mere copying. But Correa imbibed the spirit of the past, integrating it with the local and the contemporary. His Indian Contemporary was not borrowed, nor did it emulate or obliterate history.

Sikha Datta: 'I'm an architect. And I've lived in Salt Lake City long before Correa's City Centre Mall came up. The difference it has made to the area is remarkable – a difference that I would attribute to Correa's architecture, which fuses an Indian bazaar with a mall. It has changed the way people shop, eat out and spend time. The mall has an inclusive character, promising something for every kind of visitor. What was once a dark, lonely place after sunset is now teeming with energy and life. The central "Kund" area is especially popular, a meeting ground for people of all ages to just sit on the various levels of its steps and talk.'

Shimul Javeri Kadri: 'When I was in college in the 80s, we were looking for answers to questions like "What is an Indian identity?"

Champalimaud Centre for the Unknown, Lisbon.



We wanted to get out of the Kahn-Corbusier obsession, so we went into villages to study Laurie Baker and vernacular architecture. For us, Correa was a powerful voice, embracing modernity with pride in the past. His use of scale and context was exceptional, together with the way his buildings draw visitors in, from one vista to another.

‘The recent international buildings are a wonderful way to complete his career – the genre itself, together with the incorporation of technology, is so different from building in India. And of course his writing, coming from a practicing architect, was especially powerful, because he walked the talk.’

Correa was honoured with the Padma Shri in 1972 and Padma Vibhushan in 2006. Articulate, eloquent and with an elegant turn of phrase, he could have been a writer, if he wasn’t an architect. An advocate of the middle path, he was no extremist. In one of his essays, Correa says: ‘We must understand that almost all development

‘It is wonderful how climate can generate architectural form. This is true of the igloo, it’s true of the Pacific islands. It’s true everywhere. You have to respect climate. You have to look at local materials, local technology, and then you can come up with elegant, surprising architecture.’

LIC building, New Delhi.



involves a certain exploitation of resources, just as conservation implies the reverse. Obviously, what we need to do is not just maximise one extreme or the other, but find the point of balance between the two, i.e. that point of trade-off where both objectives are optimised.'

Extending the notion of 'architecture' beyond a mere building, he wrote: Those of us who live and work in South Bombay do not have the foggiest notion of what it means to commute up and down twice a day, jammed in overcrowded trains or stuck in never-ending traffic jams. Yet we oppose vehemently (the knee-jerk reaction!) any attempt to ease these journeys. Now that the population of Bombay has crossed ten million, can we honestly believe that we do not need at least one major new north-south artery? Certainly its alignment might involve some reclamation (that word again), but what's wrong with that - as long as the strip of land so gained is used for

IUCAA, Pune – Foucault's Pendulum in the faculty offices.



Cidade De Goa – the guest rooms and balconies overlooking the beach.

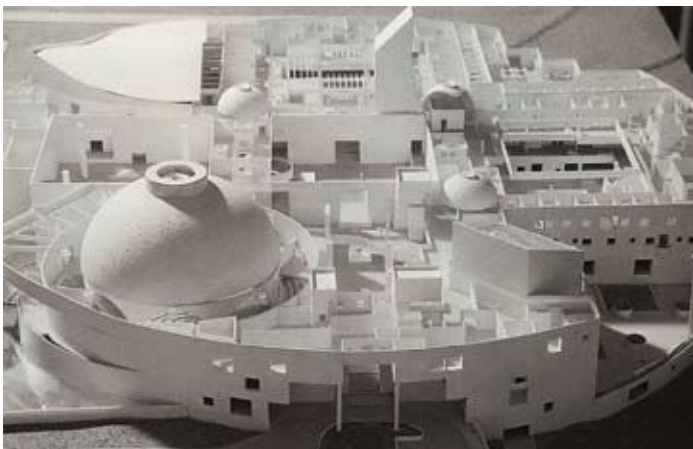




Ismaili Centre, Toronto (Prayer hall).

A faceted glass dome peaks above the prayer hall of Toronto's new Charles Correa-designed Ismaili Centre, which shares a patch of parkland with Fumihiko Maki's Aga Khan Museum. The panes of translucent glass diffuse the bright sunlight during the day, but allow the dome to glow like a beacon at night when the space is illuminated from within.

Vidhan Bhavan, Bhopal.




public purposes - like schools, hospitals, maidans, and all the other amenities this city so desperately needs. And in order to ensure that it is used in an equitable manner, this expressway should be reserved exclusively for public buses during the rush hours (say 9 to 10 every morning and 5.30 to 6.30 every evening). During the rest of the day, there should be reserved bus lanes, free of private cars and taxis.'

Correa was a fierce critic of modern urban planning and was concerned about living conditions of the poor. Of the way modern cities were designed, he once said: 'Market forces do not make cities, they destroy them.' He was clear that architecture must first be about human dignity. The modernism of Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, was vociferous in its rejection of history and tradition, with a messianic obsession to redesign objects of everyday use, as if no such thing had ever been done before. They used the modern house as

Portuguese Church, Mumbai.



a battering ram in their onslaught on conventional ideas, if not necessarily on how domestic life should be lived, then at least on how it should look. But Correa's work was distinguished by its humane touch. As Bijal Parikh, an intern in the office of SJK Architects says, 'Correa's buildings enrich the lives of the people using them, leaving a legacy for many generations. His was truly the architecture of humanity.'

Said Correa, 'Working in India has a lot of frustrations, but the chance to address larger and more fundamental issues is one of its greatest opportunities.' His work often seemed like the perfect solution to a particular problem. And if it is true, as Philip Johnson said, that all architects want to live beyond their deaths, then surely Charles Correa continues to live. 

National Crafts Museum, Delhi.



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A Lofty Perch

Aamir & Hameeda, the creative force behind AANDH, Hyderabad design a swanky penthouse for their client in the affluent Banjara Hills area of Hyderabad. Swinging dramatically from boho chic and contemporary styles to serene, zen and traditional aesthetics, their amazing repertoire and experiences morph and coalesce to project the needs of their clients in an exemplary fashion.





A flowering frangipani tree adds to the aura of harmony

TEXT: DEEPA SHAIENDRA

PHOTOGRAPHS: SAMEER CHAWDA, COURTESY THE ARCHITECTS

Wuthering heights! That's the incredulous feeling that grips the visitor to the Aamir and Hameeda designed penthouse crib! The client, Goutam, a biking enthusiast and buddy of Aamir Sharma approached the architectural firm to design a penthouse for him in the affluent Banjara Hills area of Hyderabad. The client had bought the terrace rights for the 2,500 sq ft roof top of an exclusive four apartment building. Strategically perched at a far corner of the Banjara Hills with a clear 100-ft drop, the site afforded a breathtaking panoramic view of the city,

capturing the jagged spectacle of the craggy ramparts of the Golconda Fort and the illuminated splendour of the seven tombs beyond.

The brief was to create a single bedroom penthouse pad, away from his home, where he could host parties, entertain and unwind over the weekends. The firm was given a turnaround time of three short months to complete the entire penthouse. Hence civil works were not an option. 'We decided to raise a structure with metal and puff panels and enclose the surroundings with glass so that we could capture the view', says the designer who





Open industrial grade air-conditioning ducts across the wall add a dash of boho chic to the space.



Inverted channees or filtration devices, picked up from a scrap store are fitted with filament bulbs to create interesting pendant lights.

loves to sketch and is committed to instinctive design. 'We started by designing the temporary structure and took a 17' ceiling height which slopes down to a 14' height. Given the heavy wind load at that height, we used untreated cement boards as a false ceiling for the entire structure with grooves to allow for play; as we realised that any other form of false ceiling like Plaster of Paris or gypsum board would crack with the vibration caused by the wind speeds.'

Once the basic structural shell was in place, each element started to take shape. Captured moments and dedicated spaces were carved out, using innovative materials and treated textures. Since the client loved warm colours, the Aamir replicated the feel of a log cabin with an elemental wood panelled seating area using

an exotic veneer, imported from Africa. An inviting seating area was created with the effusive use of stone, wood and leather. Tones of stone-grey textile were used on the handpicked sofa, a vintage car seat that perfectly matched the centre table that was crafted in stone with Japanese inscriptions, picked up from Good Earth. This was complemented by a rugged log bench and two exquisite log stools from Bali and completed with a stressless leather chair on which the client could relax and unwind. A series of 7' tall paintings on the wooden wall depicted the four shades of man in earthy tones. 'I found these four interesting wall hangings from the lot of artworks that the client had collected over his travels and from his own family heirlooms. We used exotic wicker fans imported

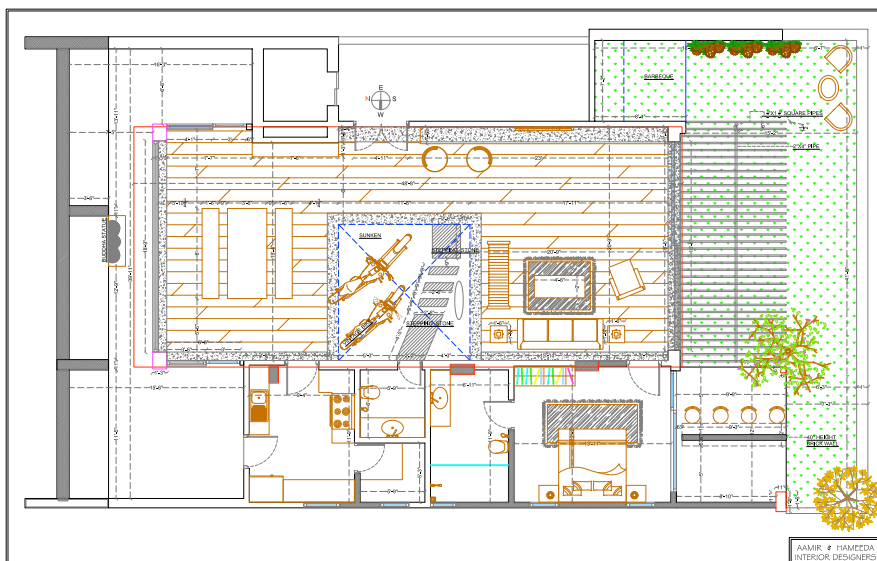
A 500-year-old wooden vahana from a Chennai temple stands guard over the Balinese log dining table and log benches.







Aamir Sharma



from the US to give a gentle breeze in the surrounding area. Because we had a 14' ceiling height, the wicker fan added tropical beauty to the ambience.' On a side table is a whimsical piece of driftwood with a sleeping Buddha carved within; a gift from a friend who was aware of the client's fondness for the Buddha.

The facing wall has a giant television screen and home theatre system, along with a beautiful painting in earthy hues featuring the pantheon of Indian gods with delicate features. Regarding the air-conditioning in the area, Aamir says: 'We used an open duct, very industrial in nature with eyeballs fixed in it. Since the client loves to read, we fashioned a book rack with 18 mm metal sheets, inserted directly into the wall.' The exposed industrial grade AC ducts that run the length of the wall, combined with a wonderfully textured wall finish and complemented by the Indian art makes a compelling design statement.

Possibly, the most intriguing feature of the penthouse are the two vintage motorcycles that revv up the excitement and form the central design element of the space. 'Both the client and I share the same passion for biking. Thus, a sunken area on the premises leading to the powder room was filled with gravel and showcased two magnificent vintage motorcycles, one a 1952 Triumph and the other, a 1960 BSA, both personally



An interesting wood and stone bar counter on the open deck makes an ideal perch to share some brews with the biking buddies.



The austere and elegant bedroom looks out onto a deck that has the bar counter and a simple garden beyond.

Possibly, the most intriguing feature of the penthouse are the two vintage motorcycles that revv up the excitement and form the central design element of the space. 'Both the client and I share the same passion for biking. Thus, a sunken area on the premises leading to the powder room was filled with gravel and showcased two magnificent vintage motorcycles, one a 1952 Triumph and the other, a 1960 BSA, both personally hand-picked and restored by me,' says Aamir.

hand-picked and restored by me.' The interesting part is that the two vintage bikes were bought from scrap and were put together over the 90 days while he researched extensively, just to get the right feel of the 50s and 60s! A splash of excitement is infused with an inclined slatted wooden ramp set above the gravel pit, with recessed lighting that leads up to the powder room. To camouflage the powder room, an interesting geometrical design element features rafters of wood, running all the way from the floor and along the ceiling that also creates an intimate niche for lounging.

A long polished log with two log benches from Bali becomes an inviting dining space. Suspended from above are six warm hanging lights, which were basically

penthouse

Manna for the human spirit. A mesmerizing view of Goutam's residence as night falls over Hyderabad.



some kind of filtration devices that the designer picked up from a scrap store and fitted with filament bulbs to create interesting pendant lights. An antique 500-year-old vahana that originally guarded a temple in Chennai sits solemnly on a low wooden table and added an unexpected punch of drama to the space. The dining area overlooks an elemental garden of bamboo and thick foliage with a 5' high stone Buddha head that looks serenely towards the penthouse, enveloping the entire space with a deep sense of calmness and tranquillity.

The duct wall facing the dining area is deliciously clad with half-cut river pebbles and supports a beautiful log

console and a painting with a mystical Indian mythological theme. A 100-year-old carpet and a lounging chair rounds off the feeling of mellowness.

The bedroom has an elegant and austere ambience. One feature wall is designed with grey cement finished tiles that accentuate the exquisite log headboard; with stylish jute wallpaper making up the rest. Above the headboard is an eye-catching artwork crafted with colourful fabric, by Goutam's brother. The bedroom leads out onto a deck that affords a lovely view of the city and a bar counter that connects to the garden. The bar table is clad with natural stone and the outdoor deck is detailed with artificial grass.

The interiors of the penthouse are drawn seamlessly into the open spaces with wall to wall French windows that spill out onto the garden area outside. A log bench, two chairs to recline in and the bar counter with six stools make an ideal perch to sit outside with a glass of brew and enjoy the ethereal view of the rocky Deccani skyline. The entire flooring for the penthouse is engineered hard wood. The perfect decor embellishments, the vintage motorcycles, the choice selection of Balinese logs, stone and leather give a rugged masculine ambience and completely deliver the client's brief – of a penthouse pad in which to hang out with the lads! 

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SHELL HOUSE

TEXT: DEVYANI JAYAKAR
PHOTOGRAPHS: TEJAS SHAH,
COURTESY THE ARCHITECT

Dipen Gada designs a home in Vadodara on a 94,000 sq ft plot, using concrete to advantage. With a footprint of 140 ft x 48 ft, the home enjoys enviable views from all its rooms.

A sweeping, sunken driveway is flanked by walls, with green lawns dotted with waterbodies and trees, unfurling from the ground level at the top of the walls. The approach beckons, luring you in anticipation of what's next and also accords a sense of arrival to this bungalow. An additional element of drama is incorporated when the space is lit up at night.

Leaf-shaped motifs in stainless steel, 18 inches long, are embedded in a precise row along one edge of the driveway. When the lights at the base of the wall are turned on, a measured focal point is created on each leaf, drawing attention to the subtle detailing. 'The credit for this goes to the coordinator at the site, since we hadn't planned the way the lighting adds to the aesthetics,' says Dipen Gada of Dipen Gada & Associates.

The living room is connected to a semi-open double height courtyard which functions as a sit-out for the family. It is protected by a dot matrix geometric screen while a Buddha sculpture sits at one end, its calm composure pervading the space.





The living room has a swing, ubiquitous to traditional homes. The aesthetic is a pared-down, minimal one.



Dipen Gada

A short flight of steps at the end of the driveway leads to the entrance of the house. The exterior is white, with horizontal timber-textured cast concrete walls. 'Concrete as a building material has a history which goes back more than 1000 years. It ages well and provides solidity, without overpowering other materials. It is also visually cool,' says Dipen.

'Rather than locating the house at the front of the plot, which would have meant cutting down several mango, palm and coconut trees, we've used the long, narrow space at the back of the site for the structure,' says Dipen. Retaining the trees also meant that a buffer would be in place, in the event that any development took place at the front of the plot in the future. 'We also decided not to have a swimming pool, which would have been an unnecessary expense. The home is just for a family of four, not for entertaining, so we didn't want to add to the maintenance.'



Unlike most homes, there is no 'porch' or 'canopy' which extends outside the bungalow. The entrance is aligned with the living spaces, the entire structure encased by a large rectangular 'shell' which functions as a sheltering canopy in places. The path to the main door has lily ponds on either side, with mushroom shaped stone fountains which rise from the water when in use. A champa tree shares the lily pond with the fountains.

Large open spaces and concrete walls are the order of the day in this bungalow.

The ceilings are 11.5 ft high and the interiors enjoy cross ventilation, with all rooms appearing to run on into the outdoors. Stemming from a freehand sketch, a 16-ft-high leaf in cast concrete, treated in parts in German silver, rises from the ground floor to the floor above. Located at the heart of the house, it is connected with all the areas in the home. 'It wasn't easy to cast this leaf,' recalls Dipen.

Kota stone in its many avatars, both textured as well as mirror polished, has been used extensively within this home, often juxtaposed for



The dining table is located in a double height space, with lime green upholstery on the dining chairs. A seating arrangement alongside is in a happy, yellow ochre. The fans overhead are designed to provide breeze on two sides.







Above the living room is semi-covered terrace with a ceramic tile flooring in a rustic look. A round dining table encourages meals and conversations while overlooking the greenery outside.



effect. 'I prefer using kota, over more expensive materials,' says Dipen. 'It is Indian, neutral in colour, cost-effective and challenges the creativity of the designer.' Together with the concrete, it contributes to the humble, unpretentious material palette. The aesthetic, however, is very much of today.

Three lamps shaped like inverted cones are suspended in the stairwell. Four, five and six feet long respectively, they have been customised in-house and are made of 4 mm metal plates, laser-cut with motifs from the world of music – casting intricate shadows on the walls, when lit. 'Except for the concealed lights, everything was designed especially for this site,' says Dipen.

The dining table is located in a double height space, with lime green upholstery on the dining chairs. A seating arrangement alongside is in a happy, yellow ochre. The fans overhead are designed to provide breeze on two sides. The living room has a swing, ubiquitous to traditional homes. Having found its way into folk songs and art, the swing is woven into

bungalow



the very fabric of life in Gujarat. The living room is connected to a semi-open double height courtyard which functions as a sit-out for the family. It is protected by a dot matrix geometric screen while a Buddha sculpture sits at one end, its calm composure pervading the space.

Above the living room is a semi-covered terrace with a ceramic tile flooring in a rustic look. A round dining table encourages meals and conversations while overlooking the greenery outside. As expected, the bedrooms are large, with one en-suite bath in IPS and kota. Appointed with a Jacuzzi, it provides all

the luxuries of modern living.

Pergolas, courtyards, verandahs, terraces, water bodies and landscaping provide all the bells and whistles for this home – but with a parsimonious use of materials which contributes to an uncontrived aesthetic. ‘We are moving towards an architectural style in which the interiors are functional and stripped of unnecessary frills,’ says Dipen. ‘And I’m happy with how the house looks at different times of the day as well as at night.’ Yes, because the lights don’t just come on at night...they present a carefully orchestrated scene. 

Unlike most homes, there is no ‘porch’ or ‘canopy’ which extends outside the bungalow. The entrance is aligned with the living spaces, the entire structure encased by a large rectangular ‘shell’ which functions as a sheltering canopy in places.



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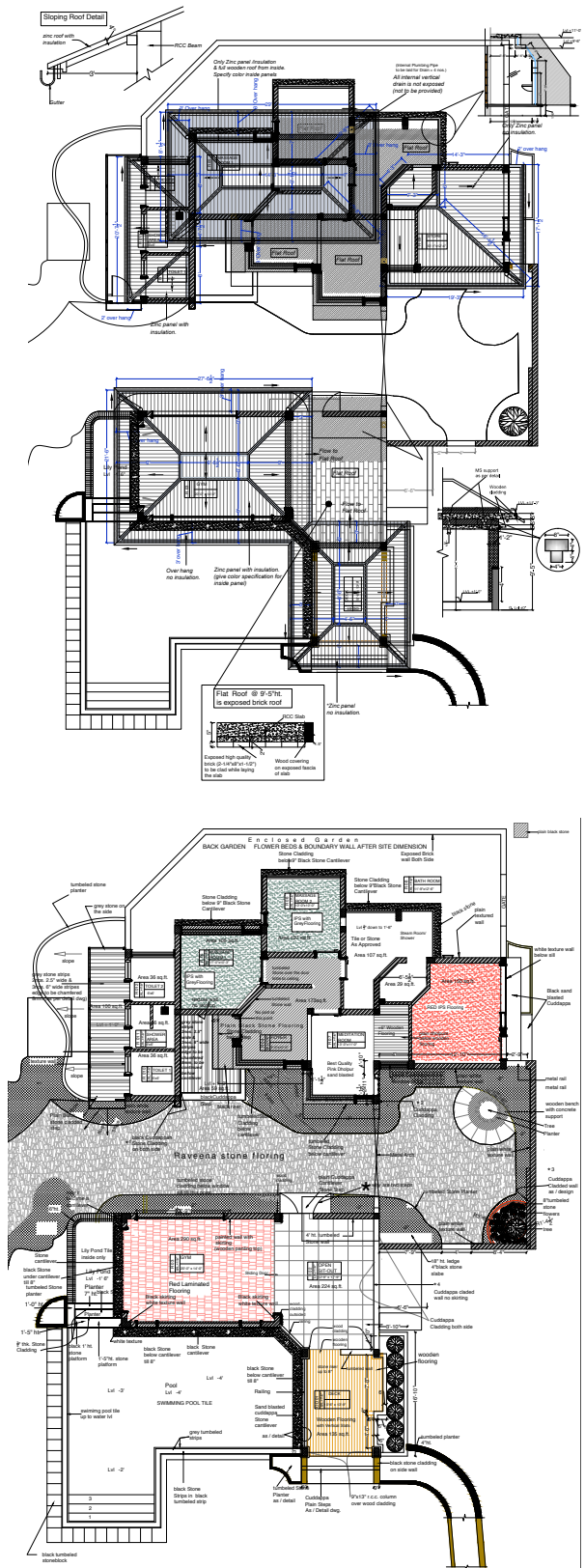
One With Nature

Interior designer Monica Khanna of Monica Khanna Designs, New Delhi works her magic to craft a rustic recreational space in a farmhouse in New Delhi. She manages to create harmony with the natural surroundings, at the same time giving the clients a tranquil abode to unwind in style.

TEXT: KANUPRIYA GARG

PHOTOGRAPHS: BHARAT AGGARWAL, COURTESY THE DESIGNER







Picture a space filled with lush green surroundings where one wakes up to the sound of birds and visuals of dancing peacocks. A space where one can meditate, swim, walk, even take a massage... No. I am not describing a luxury resort, rather just giving an insight into the life one can lead in this aesthetic recreational space, designed by interior designer Monica Khanna for her client in the heart of New Delhi.

'My client has a very busy professional life. The brief I received from her was to have a place where she could relax, away from city life in spite of being situated in the heart of the city. She also wanted the recreational part of the house to be designed in a unique manner and have a distinct look,' says Monica.

The farmhouse is divided into two segments – the main living space and the outhouse. The space in question here is the outhouse space, which is used as a lounging space as well as for holding parties or get-togethers.

Interestingly, there was so much character in the exterior spaces that the designer decided to keep the interiors simple. She wanted to design a space that was timeless and not just trendy – something that would last forever. 'My client finds coastal architecture and rooflines



'My client finds coastal architecture and rooflines very appealing. We have employed a contemporary fusion of Sri Lankan, Thai and Mediterranean design elements,' says Monica.



very appealing. Since such design elements are not practical in Delhi's dry heat, we employed a contemporary fusion of Sri Lankan, Thai and Mediterranean elements,' she says. 'I was also inspired by the existing landscape which had beautiful trees, birds and peacocks just casually roaming around. As a result I decided to work with mediums that were close to nature,' Monica adds. The space is contemporary, earthy and easy to maintain. Both the indoor and outdoor areas highlight the green exterior backdrop. The colours, materials and design elements blend beautifully with the surroundings.

Most of the structure

has been put together with bricks, wood, natural stones like the Cuddapah and Raveena. 'We haven't used any new wood, rather picked up completely recycled old wood,' says Monica. Beautiful pathways are crafted out of cement. A lot of thought has been given to the kind of vegetation used in the exteriors to minimise the influx of mosquitoes during the monsoons and winters. 'We have tried to make the whole area "pigeon-proof" to make sure they don't sit around all the time on the corners of the roofs and other places,' she adds.

Through the foyer one comes across the informal sitting area next to the



'I was inspired by the existing landscape which had beautiful trees, birds and peacocks just casually roaming around. As a result I decided to work with mediums that were close to nature,' Monica says.



main and the lily pool, which transforms into a lounging space. Adjoining this is the wooden deck area, which houses the open sit-out – a cosy space to unwind. The open informal dining area makes for a charming space with rustic wooden elements. Mist nozzles in the roof have been provided in the open areas, which work very well with the dry heat of Delhi. All of this is done with recycled water.

The outhouse also encloses a couple of massage rooms, a reading room, a meditation space, spa and sauna along with a few bathrooms. A single roof has been given to three adjacent bathrooms with beautiful views from the inside. An interesting outdoor shower

is beautified with a lovely elephant sculpture imported from Sri Lanka. The massage rooms with large windows and beautiful skylights create the perfect ambience to de-stress. A small water body with a large sitting Buddha forms the focal point of this recreational space.

‘We wanted exposed roofs from the inside, thus we haven’t employed any false ceilings. The concept of flat roofs with exposed bricks from underneath is very unusual in India. We put in a lot of thought to get this concept going. We had flat roofs and sloping roofs meeting each other, which was a difficult task to achieve,’ says Monica. The sloping roofs for the project are imported and fabricated in zinc. Most



Old wicker chairs and statues imbue the space with an old-world charm. Most of the furniture is bespoke and built on-site; however some of the pieces have been imported from Sri Lanka.



The colours, materials and design elements blend beautifully with the surroundings. Both the indoor and outdoor areas highlight the green exterior backdrop.

The massage rooms with large windows and beautiful skylights create the perfect ambience to de-stress.



of the walls are done in natural stone without any cladding. Rough Mexican plaster is employed throughout. She has also utilised exposed gutters made of zinc to continue the concept of blending in with nature.

Minimalistic décor concept is carried throughout the space. Old wicker chairs and statues imbue the space with an old-world charm. Most of the furniture is bespoke and

built on-site; however some of the pieces have been imported from Sri Lanka. A few dramatic pieces like the Buddha panel and a large mirror in the foyer are used to break the monotony. Mood lighting and a well-connected music system make sure the space has all the necessary elements to host the best parties and barbeques. 'The client doesn't believe in spending





The open informal dining area is a charming space with rustic wooden elements. The concept of flat roofs with exposed bricks from underneath is used here. Most of the walls are done in natural stone without any cladding.

farmhouse

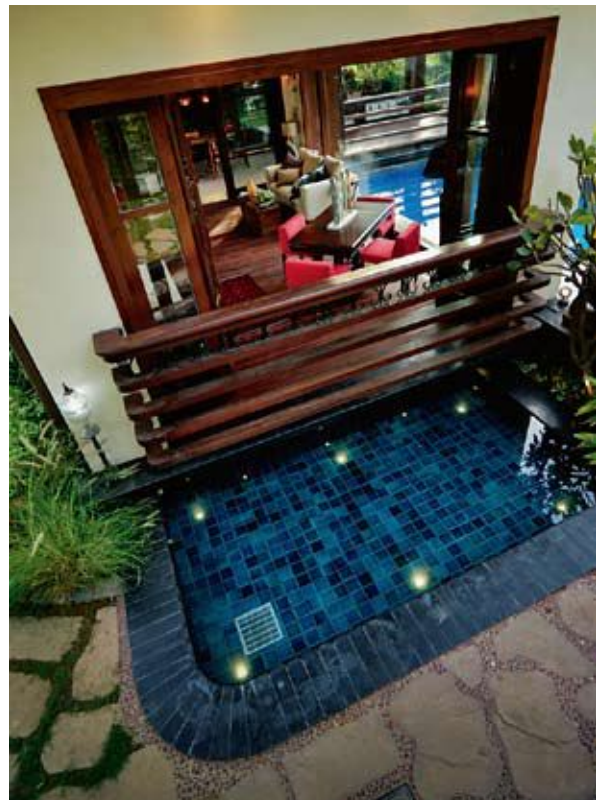


unnecessary money on very expensive art. She prefers to spend that money on having lots of flowers around so that the place looks like a paradise in the blooming season,' says Monica.

To give privacy, motorised blinds have been provided. Old carpets and kilims lend the space a contemporary charm. 'When you want to de-stress, you can't have clutter around – even from the decorative point of view,' says Monica.

Monica has managed to create a paradise for her client amidst the chaos of a busy city life. A space where each element blends in with nature effortlessly to make sure the residents get exactly what they hoped for – a soothing retreat!! 🏡

There was so much character in the exterior spaces that the designer decided to keep the interiors simple. She wanted to design a space that was timeless and not just trendy.



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Pristine Palette



TEXT: MITALEE KURDEKAR
PHOTOGRAPHS: SUBHASH PATIL,
COURTESY THE ARCHITECT



Imagine that, post a long workday and after meandering your way through the chaotic traffic of Mumbai, you come home only to be greeted by a sea of calming colours. It would probably be the perfect way for any city dweller to de-stress, wouldn't you agree? Behzad Kharas, principal architect at The BNK Group, takes this very notion, blends in a touch of quiet luxury and comes up with a winning formula for a swanky city pad that hits all the right notes.

Floating high up above the clouds, in one of Parel's famous skyscrapers, lies this 1,500 sq ft apartment, which is home to the Parmar family. It is a study in measured opulence, leaving an impact without the unnecessary fuss that screaming, over-the-top luxury boasts. When you add a predominantly white and beige palette to the mix, you get a fresh take on apartment living. Behzad Kharas, principal architect at The BNK Group, has made intelligent use of this neutral shade card to play around with motifs and textures, in turn creating an intriguing mix of patterns, that result in a charmingly compact, albeit, well fitted out space.

Originally a four-bedroom apartment, the space has been opened up to make way for three bedrooms. Behzad's client, who happens to be his godfather, trusted his vision completely and gave him a free hand with the project. 'Keeping his taste in mind, we were very careful about what we wanted to do. The whole concept was to use a lot of patterns and textures, while keeping it as serene and simple as possible,' says Behzad.



The curved passage wall is clad in veneer, while a multi-hued oil on canvas, by a local artist, adds a healthy dose of vibrancy in the corridor.

As you enter the plush apartment, you are met by a geometric motif panel at the entrance. This aluminium composite backlit panel announces the name of the apartment's owners and is flanked by an impressive, cream door, with a clear glass handle, which resonates the aforementioned leitmotif in a veneer on veneer laser cut applique finish. Step in and it all comes together at the mandir, where an exquisite jaali uses three different

patterns in unison to lend an intriguing twist to classic jaalis. The result is a beautiful blend of old and new, offering a stunning play of light, patterns and texture. 'We did a lot of juggling in the layout of the apartment. Carving out some space in the foyer, we made way for the mandir. The motif was something we came up with, because we didn't want anything ornate or classical in nature. It had to be a modern interpretation, yet reflect the clients'



Behzad has made intelligent use of a neutral shade card to play around with motifs and textures, in turn creating an intriguing mix of patterns, that result in a charmingly compact, albeit, well fitted out space.





Rajasthani culture well,' explains Behzad.

The Crema Balesimo marble floor (used throughout the house) leads the way in. The passage wall is clad in the same veneer as the door and curves at the end towards the living room, where the TV unit sits. A self-texture has been created in order to camouflage the servants' area, which lies hidden behind this space and also houses the wiring and other TV equipment. In essence, the veneer wraps the wall, stretching from the entrance passage to the living room, aesthetically binding the two areas. The space also holds an industrial looking shoe rack, made of aluminium and later spruced up by being plastered with a 3D design on mdf. A delightful, oval mirror complements it. A little layout jugglery sees the addition of storage lofts

in the passage, while a bright oil-on-canvas, by a local artist, adds a healthy dose of vibrancy in the corridor.

The original kitchen, which was very linear and tiny, makes way for a moderate sized kitchen, replete with appliances by Siemens and Blanco. The space was quite tight and lacked natural light, hence was kept all white with a mirror dado fascia. It is fitted with PU lacquered, black shutters that offer an edgy twist, while a green boxwood hedge lends a pop of colour and life.

The plush living room conforms to a similar design standard, with a repeat of subtle shades and textural elements. Sticking to a muted colour palette, one finds that grey, white and beige dominate the area. Custom made wooden and fabric seating surrounds a magnificent set of six glass-covered, mov-

able tables that are shaped to recreate the geometry from the jaalis. Forming a perfect backdrop to the large, silver sofa, is a screen. 'Here, the centre panel, made of alabaster, is backlit and finished with another sheet of alabaster, which has been cut to this particular profile, so as to add another texture and make the screen appear interesting even without indirect light. Also, the same alabaster design is replicated behind the TV,' says Behzad. A couple of niches, forming part of the column verticals, were clad in mirror. These flank the centre panel, providing storage space for artefacts that have been collected over the years by the lady of the house. The entire space boasts lighting automation.

On the other side of the room rests the dining table, in all its refined glory. Clus-



Cluster lights in white and gold are suspended over the chic wooden dining table. Understated off-white chairs and a series of black and white photographs complete the look.



ter lights in white and gold are suspend over the rectangular, wooden table. Understated off-white chairs complete the look, while a series of black and white photographs taken by the client's son – hang on the wall next door. A Corian basin, accompanied by a Corian wall, has been fitted, for practical reasons, into a niche at the side.

A ceramic artpiece hangs in the adjoining passage, which leads to the bedrooms. The master bedroom is done up in earthy tones, with a graphic-on-wood headboard, interspersed with panels providing indirect light. The room has motorised Roman blinds, below which storage units are covered with



The master bedroom is done up in earthy tones, with a graphic-on-wood headboard, interspersed with panels providing indirect light.



The son's room is pristine white with mint accents.



bevelled mirror pieces to reflect the floor. A swivelling TV pops out of a stationary unit when required, making it easy to view from both the bed and the coffee table area on the other side. A striped mirror lines the sliding wardrobe doors and the ceiling is covered in India Gypsum Gyproc to provide a unique dimension to the space. The faux leather wardrobe shutters are flush with the bathroom door, and finished with veneer handles. A pull-out dresser makes for smart storage of accessories, with a mirror sliding out of it. The master bathroom is opulent, lined with Travertine and dark brown Armani marble for the counter and the floor, respectively. Mirror-finished

drawers with indirect lighting, a marble niche and an interesting hot dipped pattern in the shower area gives the illusion of ornate settings, without going over the top.

The son's room is pristine white with mint accents in the form of furnishings. The timber headboard follows a gradation of larger to smaller panels. This sciography creates a definite degree of interest. The wardrobes are done in white with fabric glass in between. A standing mirror pulls out into a dresser. The son's bathroom comprises a custom designed Corian basin, with backlighting brightening up the shower area.


The guest room comes next. It consists of an L-

apartment



shaped sofa, lending a lounge-like feel, perfect for a relaxed evening with a book. One seat turns to make a double bed, which is framed with faux leather panels and veneer. A copper mirror and 3D form, MDF panel line the wardrobe. Marble, mirror and backlights round up the bathroom.

All in all, the apartment is an amalgamation of every shade of serene. 'If I wanted to do up my own house, it would probably be along

these lines. Muted, subtle, straight,' concludes Behzad. A simplistic approach and well thought out design ideology meant that the project took just eight months to complete. The cohesiveness of the geometrical patterns, play of light and textures, along with stark, minimalist furniture, lend this apartment a contemporary vibe, yet stay true to the need for functional, everyday living. And that, of course, is a fine recipe for city dwelling! 



The cohesiveness of the geometrical patterns, play of light and textures, along with stark, minimalist furniture, lend this apartment a contemporary vibe, yet stay true to the need for functional everyday living.



FACT FILE

LOCATION	Parel, Mumbai
COVERED AREA	1,500 sq ft
NAME OF THE FIRM	The BNK Group
PRINCIPAL ARCHITECT	Behzad Kharas
DURATION TAKEN	Eight months

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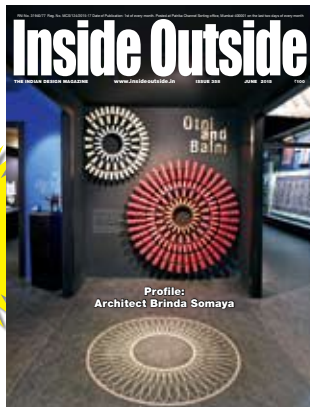
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Symmetry in Charcoal and White





Anand Shah of Anand & Associates designs a stunning home for Rajan Dapki and his family on the outskirts of Ahmedabad where the architecture and the landscaped grounds are in perfect balance.

PHOTOGRAPHS: BHARAT AGGARWAL
COURTESY THE ARCHITECTS



Architect Anand Shah founded Anand & Associates in 2012 after working with Architect Hafeez Contractor, Mumbai and global architectural firms in Dubai, for over 14 years. He has developed a unique language of architecture for private residences and corporate office buildings and hotels. The design team comprising Anand Shah, Darshita Shah and Sachin Patel was given a crisp design brief – to create a simple home on a 1,00,000 sq ft plot which encapsulated expansive garden views. ‘Though views of the outdoors were paramount this needed to be carefully balanced with the required privacy from within. The living areas were to be open plan – enhancing everyday





Light floods the internal spaces through a courtyard and an open riser staircase leading to the first floor.



Rajan Dapki believes in 'Less is more', as is evident in the home. The architecture and interiors complement each other - the contemporary uncluttered interior is a perfect foil for the modern architecture.

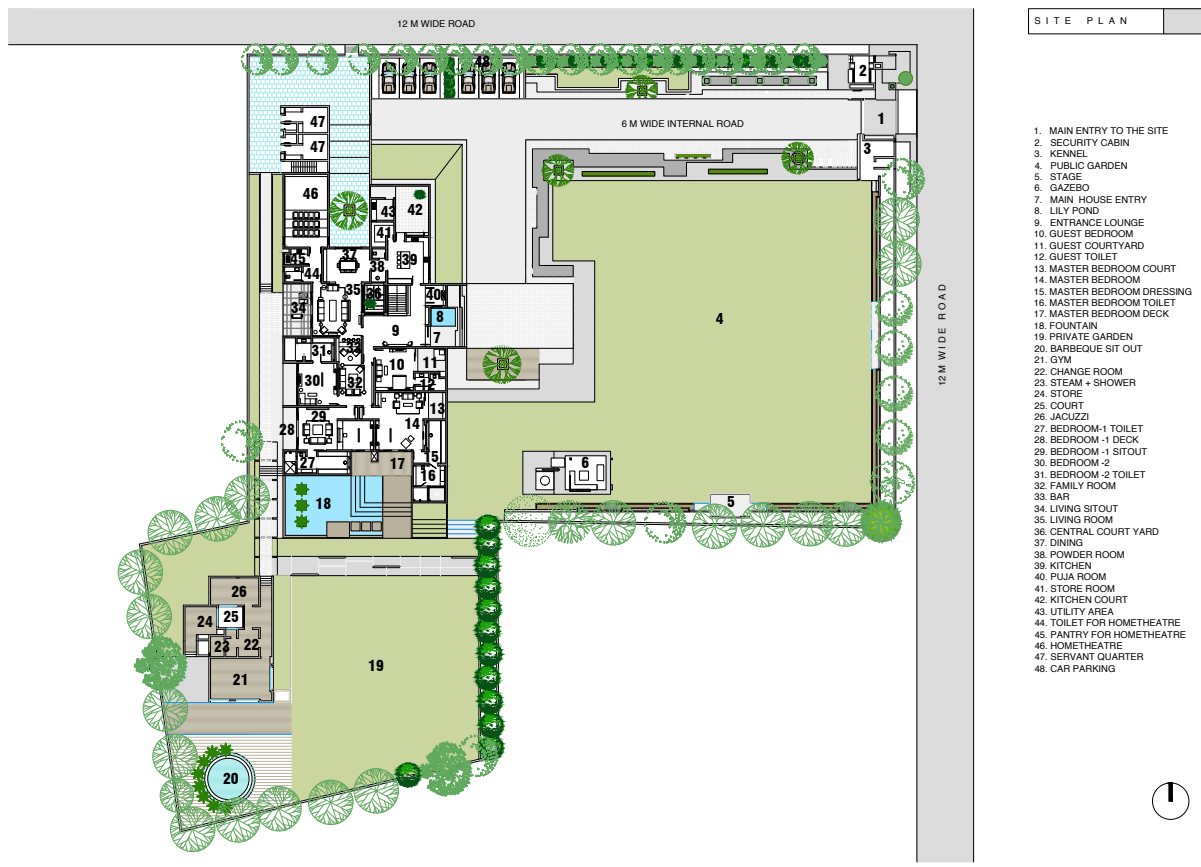
life. The architecture needed to focus on creating a contemporary, uncluttered and minimal building,' says Anand. He firmly believes that a home should reflect the client's personality and in this case, the client Rajan Dapki, believes in the concept of 'less is more'.

The house is firmly grounded with a white mint façade which gives a strong horizontal emphasis to its external form. The residence has an L-shaped configuration, with a rectangular one storey block running parallel to the 50,000 sq ft lush green garden in front and a separate single storey extension housing a gym and spa opening onto a 20,000 sq ft back garden.





Anand Shah



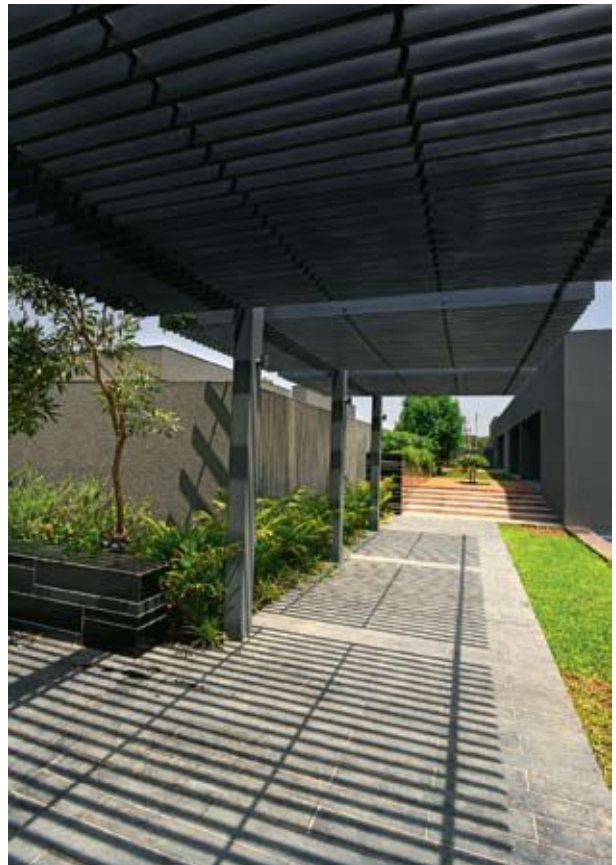


Private courtyards, a lush garden landscape - this house is a sanctuary, away from the hustle and bustle of city life. All rooms open onto a personal courtyard with views of the garden.

The house also has a duality in its appearance; the elevation facing the public garden has 150 ft long plain façade while the elevation facing the private garden exhibits more openness. The house has been consciously designed to tackle the Ahmedabad climate; there is a difference of 8 degrees in temperature inside the house.

On entering the main gate one sees an array of rectangles merged with the overall site and the landscaped grounds create a background to the minimalism. A sense of grandeur is created by the gradual increase in the levels of paving that merges into the 50,000 sq ft garden with a gazebo.

The entry to the house is through a nine ft wide pivoted entrance door besides a lily pond which leads to the entrance lobby that both separates and joins





Brass insets are used as a partition which also becomes a painting and a mural at the same time.



The polished Italian flooring in all areas ensures their seamless continuity. The use of natural teak wood lends the spaces an elegant look.


the functions of the house. As one enters the lounge you see a courtyard through which light floods the internal space and an open riser staircase leading to the first floor. From the entrance lounge to the right is the kitchen which overlooks the main 50,000 sq ft landscaped garden, and to the left is a guest suite with a personal courtyard.

Ahead of the lounge is the grand living room that is surrounded by a home theatre and dining room on one side. A bar on the opposite side creates an intimate space for more informal gatherings. The polished Italian flooring in all areas ensures their seamless continuity. The timelessness of natural teak wood is celebrated and combined with brass insets for a partition which become a painting and a mural at the same time.



residence



Tucked between the master bedroom, guest bedroom and children's bedroom is the family room with a cosy ambience. All rooms open onto a personal courtyard with views of the garden; even the bathrooms have indirect light from skylights and a view of a small flowered court. The luxurious master bedroom opens onto a sit-out deck that overlooks a fountain in the private garden. The private garden is enclosed by another small rectangular block that houses a gym and a spa and a stepped barbeque area in the corner which acts as another private yet informal space. The building with the gym and spa is connected to the main building with pergolas that change the quality of light. The 'layering' of the house permits different experiences in different spaces. 'The house has been designed unconventionally and on a lighter note Rajanbhai sometimes says we have a house without windows!' says Anand. 



There is an underlying sophistication in the choice of colour and materials in Anand's design.

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'LE PONDI'

an enchanting resort



Rooted in Puducherry's cultural and historical ethos, the resort Le Pondi is a statement of design based on nature, tranquillity and leisure.

TEXT: NALINI VATSALAN NAIR
PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY LE PONDİ



Nestled in an estuary between Chunnambar River and the Bay of Bengal, this unique getaway is a celebration of nature in its pristine glory, with the essence and free spirit of Puducherry. Set on 15 acres of lush greenery, the resort Le Pondi is owned by T Chako Paul who chose the beautiful location and architect C M Cyriac gave wings to his dreams by envisaging an aesthetically balanced green leisure resort with all modern comforts. I was surprised to hear that landscaping was done on totally barren land that has now been successfully converted into a massive green cover of six acres. More eco-friendly work is on; greenhouse vegetation is being added.

Puducherry always fascinated me with its understated elegance, its cosmopolitan atmosphere, unobtrusive charming restaurants tucked in the alleys, which offered delectable international cuisine. I always passed through, but never stayed in Puducherry. So, when my dear friends invited me to stay in Puducherry there was no hesitation but a firm 'Yes'.

Le Pondi is proud of its 70 rooms, 8 presidential pool villas, 8 luxury pool villas, 12 sea view rooms, 42 lake view rooms. It has a large swimming pool with multiple sections, Ayurveda centre and a spa, a conference

The roofs of the cottages and villas are made of 'Vizhal' a locally sourced grass which cools the interiors, adding an element of earthiness to the whole set-up against the backdrop of lush greenery.





room which can accommodate 300 people and a banquet hall. It also houses a board room, library and an activity lounge along with a private beach. The multicuisine restaurant with an open courtyard and free-flowing spaces with breathtaking views is vibrant and cheerful. There is a poolside bar, coffee shop, barbeque and a private dining gazebo.

On a bright sunny morning, we drove down at an unhurried pace from Chennai to reach Le Pondi and glided in through the semi-circular impressive entrance to acres of lush greenery and water bodies, which set the tone for things to come. The lily pond with a toughened glass bridge blended well with the beautiful surroundings. The lobby was expansive – tastefully done with wooden furniture and muted upholstery. We could see the travel desk and the boutique tucked on one side. The Presidential Pool Villa – a high end private villa with a private pool – celebrates space and comfort with an extra living room. Once you shut the heavy wooden door of the villa with a latch, you are cocooned in a world of your own.

The big courtyard with a central azure pool, green landscaped area around and pebbled stone pathways takes your breath away! The rectangular private pool, with massive high walls all around, is the focal point of this



In the 'Presidential Pool Villa' two wooden sun loungers are strategically placed under a gazebo with sloping roofs. They face a comfort zone on the opposite side of the pool, more like a 'sundowner' area to sit back with a drink.



The villa has a massive room with all modern comforts. Wooden furniture adds to the comfort of the room.

unique villa. As you enter, the two wooden sun loungers strategically placed under a gazebo with sloping roof catch your attention. They face a comfort zone on the opposite side of the pool, more like a 'sundowner' area to sit back with a drink. The greenery of yellow bamboo and palms, interspersed with shrubs, lifts your spirits.

The pool is connected through a side door to the open-to-sky shower area, a very good idea indeed. It will be wonderful to see the sky and be under the shower, when it rains!

The villa has a massive room with all modern comforts. The 'wall' facing the pool is covered with toughened glass, like huge French windows, which can be left open. For privacy, it can be curtained end to end. When left open, vibrant sunlight streams in, bringing in the cool water body and the greenery outside. It celebrates space and earthiness with an extra living room to lounge around and entertain guests. King size bed and wooden furniture adds to the comfort of the room.

The roofs of the cottages and villas are made of 'Vizhal' a locally sourced grass which cools the interiors, adding an element of earthiness to the whole set-up against the backdrop of lush greenery. The flooring is of sandstone and the furniture is sourced specially from Indonesia and Bali.

The multicuisine restaurant called, 'SMACK', opens out bright and cheerful with linear seamless corridors, white columns running along the length and the arches, giving a special effect.



I was fascinated by Le Pondi's idea of a pool area in three sections with a cabana-like sloping roof structure and a raised platform underneath. With the sea breeze wafting in, the green cover and lush green manicured lawns around, it is an area of relaxation and activities. You can lounge, relax or even do yoga soaking in the beauty of nature. Events are conducted and parties are held around. At night when the whole area is illuminated it has an ethereal effect with the lights reflecting in the water.

The multicuisine restaurant located next to it called SMACK, opens out bright and cheerful with linear seamless corridors; white columns running along the length and the arches giving a special effect. The spaces flow into each other and the food is excellent, with special emphasis on seafood.

It is all about warmth, colours and vibrant atmosphere. Outdoor and indoor spaces blend so well at 'Le Pondi'. It indeed is the perfect getaway from the busy city to spend some leisure time and unwind!!



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restaurant

Dhaba to Restaurant

Architect Santosh Thole of Santosh Thole & Associates fashions a restaurant from a humble dhaba in a shed-like space, near Aurangabad.

TEXT: KAYUS WADIA
PHOTOGRAPHS: KISHOR NIKAM



When an Aurangabad-based entrepreneur decided to turn his humble dhaba-style eatery (located 30 km from Aurangabad, halfway to Jalna and which served as a refreshment halt for tourist buses) into something more refined, he chose architect Santosh Thole to do the job. The project burgeoned from being a mere sophisticated version of a tourist halt to one that would cater to families from the two aforementioned cities as well as businessmen from the nearby industrial belt of Shendra. 'The client's intention was to only construct a permanent structure with a clean atmosphere, but we studied the location and the potential of the site and suggested he consider making it a stylish restaurant for people from Jalna and Aurangabad who needed a peaceful environment away from the pollution of the city. Also, we thought he should attract



The owner's office has a view of all the restaurant areas.





‘We needed an open space allowing the inside and the outside to interact freely. This is especially important for the family crowd as it prefers to dine al fresco.’

corporate clients,’ reminisces the principal at Santosh Thole & Associates.

Thus began the task of transforming a 20 ft x 40 ft shed-like area into a two-level, 7,500 sq ft mixed-use food destination dishing out vegetarian Maharashtrian, South Indian and Punjabi fare – all without closing the operations of the existing business. ‘The income generated by the original eatery was ploughed back into the project, which is why it had to be executed in phases,’ emphasizes the architect. ‘In fact, the first floor slab was cast in three stages. We took a little less than three years to complete it. The challenge lay mainly in the zoning and the circulation patterns. As the restaurant would now cater to diverse customers, in terms of economic strata and what they sought from the place, we had to ensure a complete, almost watertight compartmentalisation. We could

Santosh Thole and team at work.



Architect Santosh Thole graduated in 1992 from SPSMBHS College of Architecture, Kolhapur. By 1994, he had set up an independent practice specialising in architecture and interiors, aided by an assistant draftsman, on principles of innovation, dedication and accuracy. Beginning with small sites, it has now blossomed into a thriving establishment that employs six architects and two interior designers, and deals with a variety of projects ranging from jewellery showrooms, fashion boutiques and offices to large residences and hospitality spaces.





The family garden arena is brightly lit, with pleasing artefacts and curios.

not have a floating population of tourists who needed a quick halt rubbing shoulders with people who were looking forward to a relaxing time with their families. The drivers of tourist buses had their own area.' This also brought into focus the matter of service. 'The issue of staff circulation had to be resolved well. The location of the kitchen had to be just right. It's an achievement that one kitchen services all these disparate areas without descending into chaos. This was effected by giving the kitchen different access points for different areas and an internal staircase for servicing the first floor.'

The 29,000 sq ft site is located on the bend of a

road. This meant that visibility was compromised from one side, and it slipped suddenly into the view of passers-by. Therefore, the envelope had to be designed to demand attention from a distance. This would also serve to set it apart in the cluttered milieu, which includes other eating establishments as well. Thole started by echoing the turn in the road in the shape of the built space. The zoning was resolved thus: a largish chunk of space was defined as parking mainly for buses and two-wheelers with a tiny part allocated to four-wheelers; then came the eating section catering to the tourists and a separate section for drivers – the rear was reserved for



The entrance to the family garden arena.



View of the outdoor restaurant with its generous foliage.



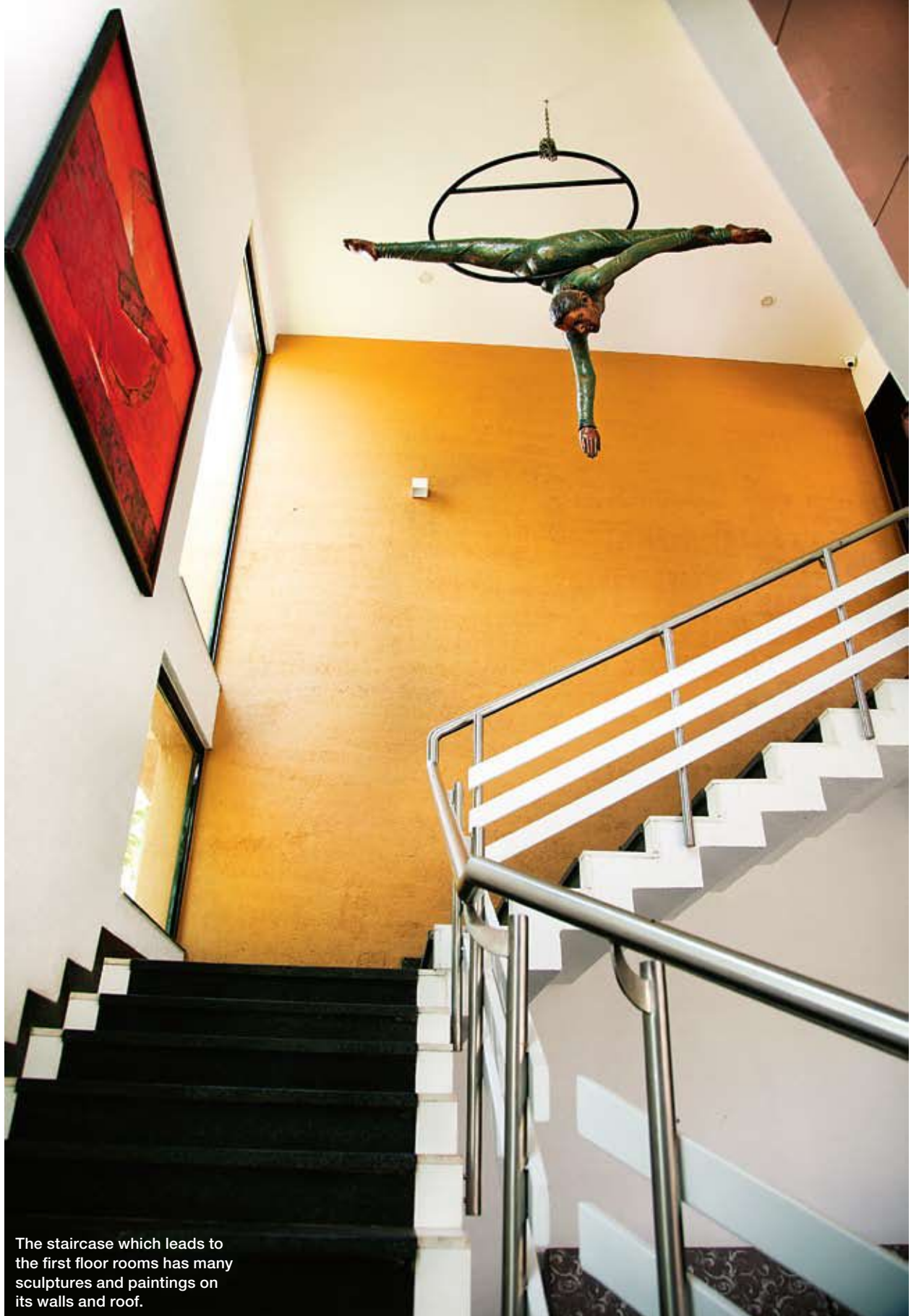
The air-conditioned and contemporary dining room on the first floor, with audiovisual facilities.

families. The storey above would look after the needs of corporate events and large family occasions. The toilet block for tourists and other people-on-the-go was resolved as a separate stand-alone entity on one side. The other sections got their own washrooms. In addition to this, three small retail outlets selling dry snacks, paan, etc, were included in the scheme as well.

An attractive feature of the front elevation is a double-height L-shaped, pergola-like element crafted out of MS pipes and painted white. This is specially designed to attract attention from afar. It is anchored at the beam at the second-floor slab-level,

and flows down by taking a sharp right-angled turn, where again it is pinned to the RCC frame with MS plugs. The slatted object stops short of the ground, thus creating a hovering effect. The colour scheme for the envelope is earthy, with expanses of ochre and burnt orange creating graphic compositions.

The tourist section has a double-height outdoor area and an enclosed area (including an air-conditioned space marked out for families who require privacy) articulated as a large, clean-lined space featuring a scattering of seating. The walls, that are parallel to the frontage, are made of glass, ensuring that the eye travels further to the



The staircase which leads to the first floor rooms has many sculptures and paintings on its walls and roof.

The 'Turban Darbar' which is an indoor dining room on the ground floor.



outdoor area and reaches the large impact wall that marks the end of the restaurant area (beyond this wall are staff quarters and utility areas). This kind of openness is deliberate, advertising the generousness of scale and also allowing the inside and the outside to interact freely. 'We needed this especially for the family crowd as it prefers to dine al fresco,' discloses the architect. The lush landscape, designed by Pune-based Jayesh Kasat, aids just that. In addition to the seamless feel of space, Thole consciously integrated several conspicuous features, by

way of dramatically-lit foliage, eye-catching sculptures (wall-mounted and free-standing) and gushing fountains nestling within water bodies. 'People like to advertise where they are on social media, and much of this advertisement happens by way of selfies. We made sure there were enough backdrops to take interesting self-portraits and group pictures,' says Thole.

The garden restaurant, or the family area, enjoys a separate entrance from the side, marked by a free-standing, MS-framed doorway. This area, too, features a sprinkling of tables; some



These colourful turbans are a reminder of the owner's Rajasthani past.

For Thole, simplicity of materials is also an integral part of creating an uncomplicated design theme.

nestling under a pergola; some within a pavilion and others in an enclosed, air-conditioned section. A few of them perch near an L-shaped water body that borders the space. One wall is decorated with rows of turbans – a nod to the client's Rajasthani roots and the logo of the restaurant. The look is elegant and simple. 'Our design practice stays away from an unnecessarily contrived or complex scheme. And we pay attention to functionality, whatever its scale, right from how cleaning equipment is stored to how, in this case,

the kitchen staff will circulate without stepping on each other's toes,' adds Thole.

The terrace can be accessed via a staircase tucked away in one corner. There are two air-conditioned halls here, each with a capacity of 50. Though the design vocabulary is the same (essentially fuss-free, clean-lined and contemporary), its manifestations are slightly different; a move to keep monotony at bay. The space between has small islands of seating interspersed with greenery, should the event spill over outside. The section above



'Utsav Darbar' – the outdoor restaurant on the first floor, which has an elegant yet simple look.

restaurant




Different views of the first floor dining area (above and below).

the small retail outlets has also been claimed for seating, but here the experience is varied, as the islands shelter under part-roofs lined on the underside with MS pipes. On one side, strategically positioned such that it gets a view of all areas on both levels, is the owner's cabin, which is more like a box that partly juts out from the façade.

For Thole, simplicity of materials is also an integral part of creating an uncomplicated design theme. Any project he undertakes should be low on maintenance. This restaurant, too, used locally-made bricks, an RCC frame structure, mild steel, solid wood and stainless steel for indoor

furniture, synthetic rattan for outdoor furniture, vitrified tiles inside, granite for external flooring and cladding, and veneers and laminates. 'What's more, we had to use the local workforce and supervise them stringently as no one from the city was willing to travel 30 km to the site and get the job done,' discloses the architect.

This project exemplifies the collaboration that should exist between client and architect. The fact that it had to be carried out in phases and that the initial budget had to be increased owing to the increase in scale could have been points of friction. But they weren't. And the end result is a stylish space that caters to a variety of users. 



FACT FILE

DESIGN TEAM

CHIEF ARCHITECT.....	SANTOSH THOLE
CIVIL ENGINEER	BURHAN SYED
ARCHITECT.....	ASHISH SOMANI
ARCHITECT.....	SWAPNIL SOGANI
INTERIOR DESIGNER.....	SACHI JAIN
LANDSCAPE DESIGNER	JAYESH KASAT



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Bold and Vibrant



Kaleido Architecture designs a lively workspace in Mumbai for an Indian multinational conglomerate, using solid colours and a stylish design concept.

**PHOTOGRAPHS: RAVI KANADE
COURTESY THE ARCHITECTS**



The laser-cut metal patterns on the wall and on the glasses are inspired by the company's logo. One can see this pattern in the form of suspended custom-made metal screens that are planned and located throughout the office area.



The hint of purple throughout the office brings in a positive vibe and livens up the entire space.

An office design needs to be comfortable, spacious, entertaining, and yet, professional enough to work in. The challenge in front of Kaleido Architects was to incorporate all these qualities in one design. The value of experience is best understood in times of challenging projects and experience certainly came in handy for the firm during this project.

A three-pronged design guideline was developed to create an office space that generates 'discretionary effort' from the employees. The design aims at collaboration, sustainability and aesthetics – a space that any employee would enjoy working in. In order to improve communication in the entire office, the architects planned an open office space where the employees could conduct both planned

and impromptu meetings whenever they want.

The waiting area was separated into three areas – one at the reception desk near the entrance, one on the raised floor outside the big conference room and the last, slightly away from the entrance area. The stone textured wall adds an interesting backdrop to the waiting area. The interesting chairs and coffee table are not just ingenious, but also alluring.

The entire office is divided into open work areas, semi-open cabins, huddle rooms, private offices, and meeting areas for both planned and casual meetings. The architects have also included a breakout area in the office. Various levels of privacy were taken into consideration while planning the different divisions of spaces. A sitting area was designed,

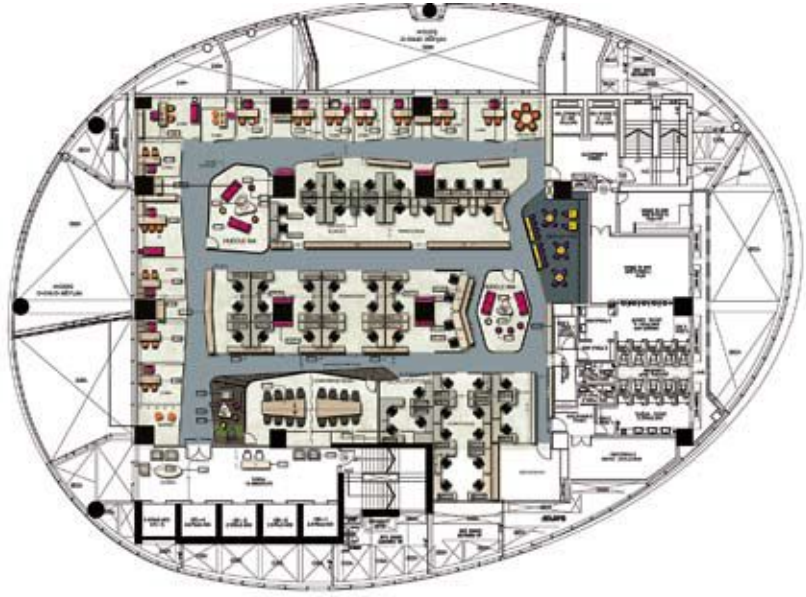
wherever possible. The most innovative ones were around the columns and divider storage, which could be used as casual interaction areas by the employees of the firm. The spaciousness of the office area makes sure that these innovative seating arrangements don't contribute to chaos, but instead, sort things out in an interesting way.

Workstations are clustered together, and each team is given a separate section. Even after grouping, a private space is maintained between two workstations. This seating arrangement simplifies team work and also maintains the private space of each employee.

Just one meeting room in the entire office was given a professional look; the other two meeting rooms were planned and made



Shivangi Narke



The architects have employed two major bold colours in the entire office. Shades of purple have been used on the seating cushions and yellow is used in the subtle detailing across the office.



The huddle rooms have curved glass partitions, creating a sense of aesthetics.



Office



into huddle rooms. They look very casual with the informal furniture, such as the big comfortable sofas and a coffee table.

The architects have employed two major bold colours in the entire office, yellow and purple. The trick was to use both within limits. Shades of purple have been used on the seating cushions and yellow is used in the subtle detailing in the entire office. The hint of purple throughout the office brings in a positive vibe and livens up the entire space. The grey flooring and the black ceiling complement each other and act as a perfect scrim for the white and purple interior. The delicate lines of light brown over black give the ceiling a definition of its own.

The abstract design and the interiors make the office look less formal and more comfortable.


The chairs above are designed in a way that will allow the employees to work as well as enjoy lunch or tea with the team, in a relaxed and comfortable manner.

FACT FILE

LOCATION:	Mumbai
AREA:	10,000 sq ft
FIRM:	Kaleido Architecture
DESIGN TEAM:	Shivangi Narke and Priyanka Shinde
YEAR OF COMPLETION:	2015

The laser-cut metal patterns on the wall and on the glasses are inspired by the company's logo. One can see this pattern in the custom-made textured stone wall adorning the reception area, and also in the form of suspended custom-made metal screens that are planned and located throughout the office area.

The entire office is equipped with little light bulbs, making sure that no corner of the office looks dark and dull. The placement of the lights makes them look like an abstract piece of art.

The company had a conservative approach towards the designing, which gave the architects the freedom to create a young and exciting ambiance with a fresh look – a space each employee will look forward to entering every day!! 

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snippets

Congratulations to Husna Rahaman



Husna Rahaman, the principal architect and interior designer at Fulcrum Studio, Bengaluru has won the 'International Property Award Asia Pacific' for the 'Best Architecture and Interior Design'. We congratulate her on this amazing feat.

'Ridiculous Copycats'



Art Musings opens their upcoming exhibition 'Ridiculous Copycats' with a solo show featuring recent works by multi-disciplinary artist Raghava KK. He works in genres as disparate as painting, film, installation, iPad Art, interactive art and performance. 'Ridiculous Copycats' is a collection of ever increasingly complex panels of

artwork that form a narrative much like a graphic novel. Raghava uses cartoons, memes, and events, both personal and historic, to create a knotted narrative of shifting meaning and identity.

The show will run from 19th to 24th August 2015 at the Jehangir Art Gallery and from 25th August to 20th September 2015 at Art Musings.



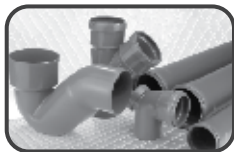
Nupurh J Launches its flagship boutique in New Delhi

Delhi-based luxury silverware brand Nupurh J has launched its flagship boutique in the capital. The 2,000 sq ft space has been conceptualised and designed by founder Nupurh Jain and Nidhi Jain. The elegant and contemporary space is dominated by a neutral colour palette mainly sandy ecru, rich cocoa and charcoal grey and is highlighted by mirror polished silverware. The boutique showcases its versatility with the new series of 'LIVING ART' furniture and wall installations.



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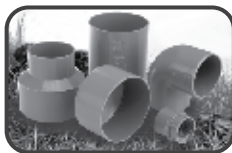
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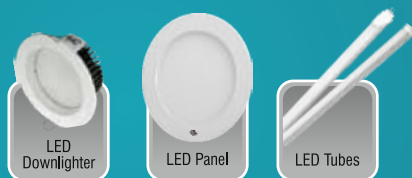
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■ BATHROOM

FITTINGS &

ACCESSORIES

Cera
Sanitaryware 17,25,27
HSIL Sanitaryware 4,5
Queo 10,11

Glaze Surface

Innovation 39
Olwin Granito 23
Pavit 13
Qutone 6
R K Marble IBC
Somany Tiles IFC

■ BOOKS & PERIODICALS

Book Sell Agencies 139
Moze Stationery 139

■ BUILDING MATERIALS

FunderMax 7
J.K Cement 15
Lubrizol 12
Prince SWR 137

■ FURNITURE & FURNITURE

FITTINGS

Encraft 37
Hettich BC
LoomCraft 61
Palladium 107,115

■ KITCHEN

BRG Group 51
Kent RO 35
Kutchina 127
Nirali 18
Rehau 31

■ DOORS, FRAMES, SHUTTERS, GATES & ACCESSORIES

Fenesta Windows 8,9
Gandhi Automation 71
Golden Locks 141
Hero Plastic 139
Mahalsa 139
Torfenster Systems
(I) Pvt Ltd. 85
Window Magic 138

■ LIGHTING & ELECTRICALS

HPL 142
Indo Simon 29

■ WOOD & WOOD SUBSTITUTES

Hydrobaths
Ramco SCG 21

■ FLOORS, WALLS & ROOFS

Asain Granito 33
Eurocon Tiles 3

■ MISCELLANEOUS

Balaji Planters 95
Expert Levitator 135



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